

25X1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

30 JUN 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Operations

25X1

FROM:

SUBJECT: Remarks Made by Major General Suddath
to OSS Veterans

Attached is a copy of remarks made by Major General Leroy Suddath, Commanding General, 1st Special Operations Command, to a meeting of OSS veterans on 29 May 1986. He asked that a copy be made available to you.

25X1

Attachment:
Remarks

DCI
EXEC
REG

B-801-ir

25X1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

SUBJECT: Remarks Made by Major General Suddath to OSS Veterans

Distribution:

Orig - Addressee w/att
1 - Executive Registry w/o att
1 - DDO w/o att
1 - DDO Registry w/o att
1 - C/[] w/att

Orig:AC/[]:30June86

25X1
25X1

CONFIDENTIAL

VETERANS OF THE OSS
AWARD OF EXCELLENCE LUNCHEON
29 MAY 86

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: VETERANS OF THE OSS.

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW PLEASED I AM TO HAVE THE HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO SPEAK TO YOU THIS AFTERNOON -- AND TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PERSONALLY MEET AND TALK TO THE MANY MEMBERS OF THIS LEGENDARY ORGANIZATION -- AND TO REKINDLE THE TIES BETWEEN TODAY'S SPECIAL FORCES AND OUR MOST DISTINGUISHED FOREBEARS.

THE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE THAT YOU HAVE PRESENTED TO SERGEANT FIRST CLASS LOPEZ-BONILLA SYMBOLIZES THE RICH LEGACY THAT HAS BEEN BEQUEATHED TO US BY THE BRAVE MEN OF THE OSS. A LEGACY THAT ENCOMPASSES AN INCREDIBLE STORY. A STORY THAT WAS SHROUDED IN COMPLETE AND TOTAL SECRECY UNTIL THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO. A STORY OF EVERYDAY LAW CLERKS -- OR TEACHERS -- OR INSURANCE SALESMEN, WHO DONNED PARATROOPER'S BOOTS AND LEAPED INTO THE RUSHING DARKNESS OVER BURMA . . . OR PADDLED ASHORE FROM A SUBMARINE AT NIGHT IN AFRICA OR ITALY OR FRANCE. IT IS THE STORY OF BUSINESS MEN WHO POSED AS INNOCENT WINE MERCHANTS OR BOOK-SELLERS WHILE THEY PICKED LOCKS, RIFLED SAFES, ARMED AND TRAINED THE LOCAL UNDERGROUND. IT IS THE STORY OF ANONYMOUS MEN WHO LIVED -- AND DIED -- TO SERVE THEIR COUNTRY. THEIR MISSIONS WERE CLASSIFIED -- THEIR DESTINATIONS UNKNOWN. THEIR CAPTURE WOULD OFTEN MEAN TORTURE AND DEATH BY A FIRING SQUAD. AND YET - IN THE END - THIS VENTURE IN TOTAL INTELLIGENCE WOULD BE WITHOUT PRECEDENT AND EQUAL OUR NATION'S HISTORY.

4/2-01 Vet of OSS

FROM YOUR HUMBLE BEGINNING IN 1941, IN THAT INCONSPICUOUS GROUP OF BRICK AND LIMESTONE BUILDINGS THAT INVITED LITTLE ATTENTION, YOU ESTABLISHED A CLANDESTINE NETWORK THAT STRETCHED AROUND THE GLOBE. FROM BERN -- TO CALCUTTA -- TO CHUNGKING -- AND TO BERLIN ITSELF. BEHIND THOSE BARRED WINDOWS OF WHAT WAS FORMERLY THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSTITUTE, WAS THE MOST MODERN AND EFFICIENT SECRET INTELLIGENCE AGENCY THE WORLD HAD EVER KNOWN.

WHEN PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT INFORMED GENERAL DONOVAN, THAT THE COORDINATOR OF INTELLIGENCE, WAS TO BE TRANSFORMED ABRUPTLY, INTO A NEW AGENCY, CALLED THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES, WORKING DIRECTLY UNDER THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF -- THE STAGE WAS SET. THE USA WAS ABOUT TO ENTER THE INTERNATIONAL CLOAK-AND-DAGGER BUSINESS; AND THE BUSINESS WAS STARTING, VIRTUALLY FROM SCRATCH.

GENERAL DONOVAN TACKLED THE STAGGERING PROBLEM OF "COLLECTING AND ANALYZING STRATEGIC INFORMATION", AND "PLANNING AND OPERATING SPECIAL SERVICES" IN THE ORDERLY MANNER THAT A LAWYER WOULD HANDLE A CASE. HE HIRED THE BEST POSSIBLE STAFF OF RESEARCH EXPERTS, OF PROSECUTORS, OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATORS. AT THE OUTSET, HE DECIDED THAT "STRENGTH OF CHARACTER" WAS THE NUMBER ONE REQUIREMENT FOR SUBVERSIVE AND DANGEROUS WORK. THE BEST PERSON TO LEAD A "DOUBLE LIFE," BEHIND ENEMY LINES, WAS THE MAN WHO HAD NEVER LIVED A DOUBLE LIFE BEFORE. IT WAS FAR EASIER TO TRAIN AN HONEST CITIZEN TO ENGAGE IN "SHADY ACTIVITIES," THAN TO TEACH HONESTY, TO A MAN OF DUBIOUS BACKGROUND.

ACCORDINGLY -- FOR HIS KEY PERSONNEL -- GENERAL DONOVAN RECRUITED PROMINENT BANKERS AND INDUSTRIALISTS -- NAMES LIKE VANDERBILT, DUPONT, MORGAN -- MEN WHO KNEW EUROPEAN FINANCE, AND IN ADDITION, HAD AN INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE, OF VARIOUS STRATEGIC AREAS. HE ENLISTED NOTED DIPLOMATS LIKE HUGH WILSON, FORMER AMBASSADOR TO GERMANY, AND ALLEN DULLES. HE ENROLLED LEADERS FROM ALL WALKS OF AMERICAN LIFE: PRESIDENT JAMES BAXTER OF WILLIAMS COLLEGE; DEAN JEFFREY ATKINSON OF AMHERST; PROFESSOR WILLIAM LANGER OF HARVARD; BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN MAGRUDER, FORMER CHIEF OF ARMY INTELLIGENCE; ACE HOLLYWOOD DIRECTORS, JOHN FORD AND GARSON KANIN; NOTED ATHLETES LIKE, MIKE BURKE, PENN STATE ALL-AMERICAN; AND JOE SAVOLDI, OF NOTRE DAME.

THERE WERE BLUEBLOODS FROM THE TOP DRAWER OF THE SOCIAL REGISTER: ROOSEVELT, MELLON, AND GUEST.

AND THERE WERE THE NAMELESS THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS WHO NEVER MADE THE HEADLINES . . . DOCTORS AND EDITORS AND INTERIOR DECORATORS -- DRUG-STORE CLERKS AND TRUCK DRIVERS AND COWBOYS. ALL OF WHOM VOLUNTARILY ACCEPTED THE LONELINESS OF A "HUNTED EXISTENCE" BEHIND ENEMY LINES. THERE WERE RECRUITS WITH EVERY BACKGROUND OF LANGUAGE AND RACE -- REFLECTIVE OF THE MELTING POT UNIQUENESS, OF OUR AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE. MANY MEMBERS OF OSS WERE OF ITALIAN OR GERMAN OR JAPANESE DESCENT -- NEWLY MADE CITIZENS, WITH A BURNING DESIRE TO PAY OFF THEIR OBLIGATIONS TO THEIR ADOPTED LAND, AS WELL AS TO DRIVE THE DICTATORS FROM THEIR ANCESTRAL HOMES. SOME OF THEM, "PAID OFF" THAT OBLIGATION WITH THEIR LIVES.

IT WAS PERILOUS WORK. A CARELESS WORD, A SINGLE FALSE MOVE, COULD ALERT THE ENEMY. AND BY ENEMY, I MEAN NOT ONLY THE AXIS POWERS, BUT THE SKEPTICAL BUREAUCRATS, HERE IN OFFICIAL WASHINGTON, WHO LOOKED ON YOUR UNORTHODOX METHODS WITH ILL-CONCEALED DISTRUST. RIVAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, RESENTED THE "AURA OF MYSTERY," THAT SURROUNDED OSS HEADQUARTERS: ITS ADDRESS WAS NEVER GIVEN, AND ITS TELEPHONE NUMBER WAS UNLISTED. IRRESPONSIBLE REPORTERS BECAME IRRITATED AT THE LACK OF INFORMATION CONCERNING YOUR ACTIVITIES -- THEY EVEN DUBBED IT "OH SO SECRET," OFTEN CONJURING UP "DARK AND DEVIOUS INTRIGUES," WORTHY OF THE MOST LURID SPY NOVEL. BUT THERE WAS A PURPOSE BEHIND ALL THIS SECRECY -- AS YOU KNOW, ALL TOO WELL.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE A NAME -- JUST A NUMBER. WITH A GROUP OF OTHER NUMBERS, YOU PROGRESSED THROUGH THE RIGORS OF PRE-SCREENING, AND, IF YOU WERE FOUND QUALIFIED, MENTALLY, PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY -- STAT
YOU BEGAN TRAINING [REDACTED] STAT
[REDACTED] -- ALL OF WHICH FLOURISHED FOR THREE YEARS -- UNSUSPECTED BY THE PUBLIC, ALBEIT THEY WERE LESS THAN AN HOUR'S DRIVE, FROM THE HEART OF THE CAPITAL.

YOU WERE TAUGHT TO MEET THE ENEMY, ON HIS TERMS -- "DIRTY TRICK" FOR "DIRTY TRICK."

WHEN YOU RETURNED HOME FOR A BRIEF VISIT BEFORE HEADING OVERSEAS -- YOU COULDN'T EVEN TELL WHAT YOU'D BEEN DOING -- OF COURSE, JUST SOME "ROUTINE TRAINING" -- ARMY STUFF. YOU KNOW AND YOU WERE PURPOSELY VAGUE ABOUT WHERE YOU WERE GOING NEXT -- BUT PROMISED TO SEND A POSTCARD WHEN YOU GOT THERE.

WELL -- WHEN YOU DID GET TO WHERE YOU WERE GOING -- WHETHER IT WAS OCCUPIED FRANCE, NORTH AFRICA, NORWAY, THE NAGA HILLS OF BURMA, OR CHUNKING -- YOU WERE READY.

THE JEDBURGHES -- DETACHMENT 101 -- COMPANIES A, B, AND C, OF THE OPERATIONAL GROUPS -- THE MARITIME UNIT -- MORALE OPERATIONS -- X2. . . EACH, AN INTEGRAL PART, OF THIS CAREFULLY DESIGNED STRUCTURE, THAT WOULD APPRAISE THE ENEMY'S STRENGTH, NOT ONLY ON THE BATTLE-FIELD, BUT IN HIS FACTORIES, AND ON HIS HOME FRONT. A STRUCTURE THAT WOULD LEARN THE ORDER OF BATTLE -- THE SECRET WEAPONS -- EVEN, THE SMALLEST DETAILS OF A DEFENSE PLAN . . . BY PLANTING AGENTS, BEHIND THE ENEMY LINES, AND DIGGING OUT, FIRSTHAND, THE INFORMATION TO BE SIFTED, ANALYZED, AND FITTED, WITH INFINITE PATIENCE, INTO THE TOTAL PICTURE.

IN ADDITION TO GATHERING MUCH NEEDED INFORMATION -- YOU ASSUMED AN ACTIVE ROLE IN UNDERMINING THE ENEMY'S MORALE, AND HAMPERING HIS STEAMROLLING OFFENSIVE. YOU CONTACTED -- ORGANIZED -- TRAINED, AND EQUIPPED, THOSE OPPRESSED PEOPLES IN THE OCCUPIED COUNTRIES. YOU DEVELOPED THEIR POTENTIAL HOSTILITY, AND TURNED IT AGAINST THE VERY ENEMY, WHO SOUGHT TO OPPRESS THEM, IN THE FORM OF TREACHERY AND SUBVERSION. THE STRATEGY WAS TERROR -- SILENT KNIVES, AND STILL MORE SILENT POISON. PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES, PLANTED IN THE MACHINERY OF A PRECISION INSTRUMENT FACTORY. A WAR THAT BROKE ALL THE RULES.

(PAUSE BRIEFLY)

IN THE MORE THAN FORTY YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED, SINCE YOU FOUGHT THOSE DARK BATTLES, DEEP INSIDE THE ENEMY'S REDOUBTS -- YOU HAVE PROBABLY REFLECTED, MORE THAN ONCE, ON THE QUESTION OF WHY? WHY DID I DO IT? I THINK WE ALL KNOW THE ANSWER -- IT WAS FAITH AND BELIEF -- IT WAS LOYALTY AND LOVE.

YOU HAD FAITH, THAT WHAT YOU WERE DOING WAS RIGHT -- FAITH, THAT YOU FOUGHT FOR ALL HUMANITY. IT WAS THE "SURE KNOWLEDGE" THAT THERE IS A PROFOUND MORAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE USE OF FORCE FOR LIBERATION, AND THE USE OF FORCE FOR CONQUEST. YOU KNEW THAT, SOME THINGS, ARE WORTH DYING FOR. ONE'S COUNTRY, IS WORTH DYING FOR -- BECAUSE IT'S THE MOST, NOBLE AND HONORABLE FORM OF GOVERNMENT, EVER DEvised BY MAN. YOU LOVED LIBERTY. YOU WERE WILLING TO FIGHT, TYRANNY -- AND YOU KNEW, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, WERE BEHIND YOU.

I CAN ASSURE YOU, THAT SAME MAGNIFICENT SPIRIT EXISTS TODAY. IT COURSES THE BLOOD STREAM, OF THE SUPERB YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN, PROUDLY SERVING OUR COUNTRY. THEY ARE THE, QUINTESSENTIAL ELEMENT, OF OUR POWER -- A POWER THAT CAPITALIZES, ON OUR UNIQUELY AMERICAN STRENGTHS -- OUR LAND, OUR INSTITUTIONS, AND OUR PEOPLE.

THE STORY OF OSS -- THE STORY THAT YOU WROTE -- IS ENDED. BUT YOUR RICH HERITAGE HAS BEEN CARRIED FORWARD PROUDLY; AND IS NOW EMBODIED IN THE SOLDIERS OF THE 1ST SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND -- IN SOLDIERS, SUCH AS SERGEANT LOPEZ-BONILLA, WHO YOU HAVE HONORED HERE TODAY.

THE UNSEEN BATTLE LINES, WHICH YOU PIONEERED, ARE TODAY GUARDED, WITH INCREASED VIGILANCE BY THE PROUD AND READY MEN "WHO WEAR THE GREEN BERET OF THE U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES. THEY ARE DEDICATED TO PRESERVING THE SAME VALUES THAT YOU CHERISHED -- FORTY YEARS AGO -- AND PERHAPS MORE SO TODAY.

ON BEHALF OF THE NEARLY 10,000 SOLDIERS OF THE 1ST SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND, WE THANK YOU FOR THE RICH LEGACY WHICH THE GALLANT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE OSS HAVE BEQUEATHED TO US AND PLEDGE TO YOU TO PRESERVE THAT HERITAGE - UNTARNISHED AND UNSULLIED IN THE SERVICE OF THE USA.